

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ITF-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SR-02 ORM-01 AID-05 IGA-01

SCCT-01 OPR-02 A-01 SY-05 /078 W

----- 024284

R 150035Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4201

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 8776

UDORN 115 OF MAY 14 SENT ACTION BANGKOK INFO MACTHAI, VIENTIANE,
56SOW NKP RTAFB THAI, CHIANGMAI AND 13AF ADVON UDORN AFLD THAI
BEING REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO QUOTE
C O N F I D E N T I A L UDORN 115

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS,TH

SUBJECT: ANTI-VIETNAMESE DEMONSTRATIONS IN SAKON NAKHON

1. ANTI-VIETNAMESE DEMONSTRATIONS BROKE OUT IN SAKON
NAKHON ON MAY 10 AND LASTED UNTIL THE EARLY HOURS OF MAY
12. AT ONE POINT SOME 600 PEOPLE WERE ESTIMANED TO BE
INVOLVED. POLICE FINALLY ARRESTED 80 AND CHARGED 37.

2. WHY THE DEMONSTRATIONS BROKE OUT AT THIS TIME IS STILL
NOT CLEAR, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THE INITIAL
IMPETUS CAME FROM ISOC. UNFORTUNATELY AFTER A MAN
NAMED KRAI KHAMPANATNT, A 50 YEAR OLD NATIVE OF SAKON
NAKHON, ORGANIZED THE AFFAIR AS A HYDE PARK TYPE GATHER-
ING, OPPORTUNISTS AND RUFFIANS USURPED CONTROL. WHAT
HAD BEEN INTENDED AS A PEACEFUL RALLY TO PROTEST VIET-
NAMESE REFUGEEESTURNED INTO A NEAR RIOT,WITH LARGE
GROUPS OF PEOPLE ROVING THROUGH TOWN ON THE NIGHT OF
MAY 11 DESTROYING PROPERTY AND LOOTING SHOPS. THE
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POLICE, ALONG WITH ABOUT A DOZEN MPS,WHO HAD REMAINED

IMPASSIVE AND UNARMED THROUGHOUT, FINALLY RESPONDED WHEN IT SEEMED THE RIOTERS WERE SPENT AND BEGAN ROUNDING UP PEOPLE IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF THE 12TH.

3. DEPUTY INTERIOR MINISTER PRAKOB ARRIVED AFTER THE DAMAGE WAS DONE ON THE 12TH AND IN A MEETING WITH OFFICIALS, SAID THAT THE THAI GOVERNMENT WOULD COMPENSATE VICTIMS OF THE PROTESTS FOR THEIR LOSSES. LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE PRESENTLY TRYING TO CALCULATE LOSSES. PRAKOB ALSO TOLD LOCAL AUTHORITIES THAT THE REFUGEES WOULD BE RETURNED TO VIETNAM WITHIN A YEAR, AND THAT STATEMENT WAS FOLLOWED BY A PHONE CALL TO SAKON NAKHON GOVERNOR FROM FOREIGN MINISTER CHATICHAI SAYING THE SAME THING.

4. ON THE NIGHT OF MAY 13 SOME SAKON NAKHON PEOPLE TRIED TO STIR THINGS UP IN NAKHON PHANOM. THEY COULD NOT QUITE GET IN GOING, ALTHOUGH SOME TEENAGERS DID RIDE MOTORCYCLE THROUGH THE STREETS THROWING STONES AT VIETNAMESE SHOPS.

5. ISOC'S MOTIVES IN THE SAKON NAKHON AFFAIR ARE STILL PUZZLING. WHAT IS CERTAIN IS THAT THE ISSUE, WITH 70,000 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN THE NORTHEAST PLAYING IMPORTANT COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC ROLES, IS AN EXPLOSIVE ONE. OFFICIALS IN BOTH SAKON NAKHON PHANOM SAY THAT IF THEIR VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY ORGANIZES A RALLY ON HO CHI MINH'S BIRTHDAY (REPORTED MAY 19), THERE WOULD DEFINITELY BE A COUNTER DEMONSTRATION.
BIGELOW UNQUOTE WHITEHOUSE

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